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ABSTRACT

This curriculum on aging is designed to help promote positive attitudes toward age and aging among young children. It focuses on developing the concepts of: (1) aging is a natural and lifelong process of growing and developing; (2) old and young are similar in many ways; (3) older people are valuable and contributing members of society; (4) old and young can enjoy each other and learn from each other; (5) people need to plan for becoming older; and (6) people have much control over the older person they become. The curriculum does not focus on illness, disability and death. Those topics should be dealt with separately from aging education and are not synonymous with aging. Selected early children's literature plays a vital role in this curriculum. A book list used in the curriculum is given. The logo on the curriculum unit, an orange cat with the acronym K.A.T.S., stands for the "Kids Are Tomorrow's Seniors" program. This program was developed by the author to promote positive attitudes toward aging among children. Today's children are the senior citizens of tomorrow, and they need to be prepared for this later stage of growth and development. (Author)

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HEALTH AND AGING CURRICULM
GRADE LEVEL: PRESCHOOL - THIRD GRADE

Sandra L. McGuire
1988

This curriculum on aging is designed to help promote positive attitudes toward age and aging among young children. It focuses on developing the concepts of: 1) Aging is a natural and lifelong process of growing and developing, 2) Old and young are similar in many ways, 3) Older people are valuable and contributing members of society, 4) Old and young can enjoy each other and learn from each other, 5) People need to plan for becoming older, and 6) People have much control over the older person they become. The curriculum does not focus on illness, disability and death. Those topics should be dealt with separately from aging education and are not synonomous with aging. Selected early children's literature plays a vital role in this curriculum. A book list used in the curriculum is given. The logo on the curriculum unit, an orange cat with the acronym K.A.T.S., stands for the "Kids Are Tomorrow's Seniors" program. This program was developed by the author to promote positive attitudes toward aging among children. Today's children are the senior citizens of tomorrow, and they need to be prepared for this later stage of growth and development.

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TEACHER RESOURCES FOR USE WITH HEALTH AND AGING CURRICULUM

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(PRESCHOOL-THIRD GRADE)
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HEALTH AND AGING

GRADE LEVEL: PRESCHOOL - 3

CONCEPT 1: AGING IS A NATURAL AND LIFELONG PROCESS OF GROWING AND DEVELOPING.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE	CONTENT	TEACHING-LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
1.1 Recognizes that one has aged and is continuing to age	From the time that we are born we are aging. Everyday people get older. Children have grown from babies, and will continue to grow to become adults.	A. READ AND DISCUSS: How Things Grow. (1986), Little Golden Book by Nancy Buss. Discuss how the book shows that animals, plants, and people grow. B. Match pictures of animal babies with the adults of the same species. Include babies and human adults in the pictures. C. Use the Activity Sheet, "Animal Babies Grow Up." Have the children arrange the pictures in chronological order. D. Use the Activity Sheet, "Children Grow Up." Have the children arrange the pictures in chronological order. E. Discuss birthdays as a yearly measure of one's chronological age. F. Ask the students to bring pictures of themselves, from baby pictures to present, to class. (Send a letter to parents requesting the pictures). Request that teachers/staff also bring in pictures to share. With the pictures engage in a discussion of how people are growing and aging. G. Cut pictures depicting different life stages from magazines and catalogs--use appropriate terminology for different life stages (i.e., baby, toddler, teenager, adult, senior citizen). Arrange the pictures in chronological order, and discuss the pictures in terms of people growing and aging. H. Construct a family tree for each child using the "Family Tree Activity Sheet." Construct the tree from great-grandparents to the children. Have the children identify the oldest member of their family.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE	CONTENT	TEACHING-LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
1.2 Is able to use a number of descriptors to discuss older people	People are multifacted and multidimensional. Older people have many characteristics besides being "old." They should be described and thought of in terms of their individuality. Descriptors that convey the entire person, and not just their chronological age should be used. Descriptors that convey a more positive image of aging such as active, attractive, knowledgable and healthy help to promote healthy aging and positive attitudes toward aging.	A. Have the children describe the older people in the pictures that they have found in books, magazines. Try to ellicit some positive descriptors from the children. B. Make a list of the words that the children come up with to describe older people. Discuss the list with the children and interject some positive descriptors into the list (i.e., happy, experienced, knowledgable, learned, helpful).
1.3 Is able to discuss How old is old?	In addition to chronological aging, the aging process has individual and societal components. Different cultures define "old" in different ways. In the United States there are certain societal ways of deciding that a person is old.	A. Discuss some of the physical characteristics that accompany aging. B. Discuss how "old age" is determined in other cultures. C. Discuss some of the ways we decide people are old in America (i.e., retirement). READ AND DISCUSS My Grandpa Retired Today (1982) by Elaine Knox-Wagner. D. Ask the children how they decide that someone is old and discuss their responses. In carrying out this discussion try to deemphasize some of the myths about aging the children might have.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE	CONTENT	TEACHING-LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
14 Recognizes that people continue to learn and do throughout life	People continue the capacity to learn throughout life. It is not uncommon for older people to go to school, or learn a new hobby or trade. Old age can be a time of great personal growth and development. Older people are knowledgable and intelligent.	A. Share pictures of older people going to school. B. READ AND DISCUSS: Grandma is Special (1976) by Susan Goldman. Talk to the children about the fact that the grandma in the story is going to school. C. Invite adults (i.e., teacher/staff) to share some of the things that they are learning. D. Discuss getting older as an opportunity to continue to learn, work, play and enjoy life. E. Ask the children to name one activity that they would like to do as an older person. F. Ask the children to name one thing that they would like to be learning as an older person.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE	CONTENT	TEACHING-LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
15 Becomes more aware of the older people around them.	The United States is becoming an "older" nation. Today almost 13% of the population--28 million people, are age 65 or older. Older people are the most rapidly growing population group in the U.S. today. Older people are all around us. They are teachers, workers, homemakers, helpers and family members. It is likely that all of us will live to become older people.	A. Discuss an older person the child knows in their family. Talk about who the older person is and what they are like. B. Discuss an older person the child knows outside their family, older people in the community. This is especially important since many children's contact with the elderly has been limited to family members. If the children cannot name an older person outside the family the instructor can talk about an older person that they know in the community. C. Have the children draw an older person. Discuss the drawings with the children. D. Make a collage of older people from the drawings of the children as well as magazine, newspaper and other pictures. E. READ AND DISCUSS The Two of Them (1979) by Aliki (read until the death of the grandfather--save the discussion on death for later curriculum units)

HEALTH AND AGING

GRADE LEVEL: PRESCHOOL - 3

CONCEPT II: OLDER PEOPLE AND YOUNGER PEOPLE ARE SIMILAR IN MANY WAYS.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE	CONTENT	TEACHING-LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
2.1 Identifies that older people and younger people have many similarities.	All people have the same basic physical, social, and emotional needs. All people evidence the same kinds of feelings. Aging does not make a person's needs and feelings change or go away. People have many similarities throughout life.	A. READ AND DISCUSS: Feelings (1984) by Aliki. Talk with the children about how these feelings are with us throughout life. Emphasize the need for love, caring, and companionship throughout life. B. Talk about basic shared needs (i.e., food/good nutrition, clothing, shelter, health, safety). C. Have the children discuss one way each of them is like an older person.
2.2 Describes activities and interests that can be carried on as one ages.	Age is not a leveler of individual differences. The things that one does as a younger person are often the things that one continues to do as an older person. Activities can be planned to be "lifespan activities". Children need to begin to think in terms of activities or interests that they would like to have throughout life.	A. Talk about older and younger people doing similar things such as: photography, reading, hiking, boating, going to school, drawing, singing, playing, swimming. Talk about how these activities can carry on throughout life. B. READ AND DISCUSS: Grandma and I (1983) by Mercer Mayer. Point out the grandmother and grandchild swimming together (swimming as a lifespan activity), or Emma (1980) by Wendy Ann Kesselman (painting as a lifespan activity). C. READ AND DISCUSS: My Noah's Ark (1978) by M. B. Goffstein. Discuss the pleasure that the 90 year old woman has experienced over the years from the Noah's Ark that her father built her as a girl. D. Have the children tell one activity they do now that they think they will do/would like to do when they are older. Have the children draw a picture about the activity and display the drawings.

HEALTH AND AGING

GRADE LEVEL: PRESCHOOL - 3

CONCEPT III: OLDER PEOPLE ARE VALUABLE AND CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS OF SOCIETY.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE	CONTENT	TEACHING-LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
3:1 Recognizes that older people are involved in many activities.	Being older does not mean that a person becomes inactive or disengaged. Many older people are very actively involved in family and community life. Some older people are more active now than they were in earlier years. Older people are involved in many activities everyday.	A. Talk about how it is important to stay physically and mentally active as an older person. B. READ AND DISCUSS: Kevin's Grandmother (1975) by Barbara Williams. Talk about what the grandmother's in the story are doing. With younger children the teacher may just want to read part of the story due to the detail about the grandmother's activities. C. Find pictures of older people in newspapers and magazines who are active and doing interesting things (i.e., Senior Helpers, politicians, students, senior workers, leisure time, family and friends). Start a picture file for the class with the rest of the pictures. D. Discuss the picture file on senior activities. Help the children to see the older person in a diversity of activities and roles. Remind the children about the older people portrayed in some of the books that have been read such as: Grandma is Special and ELF1A. Ask the children what kinds of activities they have seen older people doing. E. Visit the local Senior Citizens Center when the children can observe a Senior Center Activity (i.e., dancing, clogging, painting). F. Have Senior visitors to class (i.e., local Senior Cloggers). Have the visitors share with the children some of the things that they are doing. G. Have a puppet show with an older person who is doing something interesting as the main character. H. Have the children write a story with an interesting older person as the main character. Read the story aloud to the class when it is finished.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE	CONTENT	TEACHING-LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
3.2 Realizes that many of the advancements of today were made possible by today's senior citizens.	Older people have been contributing members of society for many years. They have learned a lot and have many skills. It is through their efforts that much has been accomplished and will continue to be accomplished.	A. Have an older visitor come to the class and discuss their life and work. Encourage the older visitor to share with the children some of the major inventions/changes that have come about through the efforts of his/her generation, and what it was like when he/she was a child. B. Discuss how older people have worked hard to make our country the great nation that it is today. C. Look at the life of a famous/significant older person. The teacher can use Alex Comfort's A Good Age for specific information about famous seniors.
3.3 Recognizes that older people are valuable and contributing members of their communities and nation.	People gain much knowledge and experience as they grow older. Through years of experience they have developed an understanding of the world around them. They are often put in positions of leadership and responsibility.	A. Discuss older workers and helpers in the community such as teachers, doctors, nurses, community leaders, policeman, fireman, artists, builders, lawyers, factory workers, and volunteers. B. Have the children name an older community worker or helper that he/she has known. C. Discuss older leaders in the community and nation (i.e., President Regan and other presidents who were older) D. Share with the children pictures of older people in helper and worker roles in the community. E. Have the children name one helper or worker role that they would like to have as an older person and draw a picture of him/herself in that role. F. Discuss how older people are often very knowledgable about things. READ AND DISCUSS The Kid's Cat Book (1984) by Tomie de Paola. The older lady in this story knows everything there is to know about cats and shares this knowledge with the children.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE	CONTENT	TEACHING-LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
3.4 Recognizes that older people are valuable and contributing members of their families.	People gain much knowledge and experience as they grow older. They gain an understanding of the world around them. Older people have much experience at handling family matters. Many older people have raised their own families. Many older people now hold positions of responsibility within their extended families. Many older people especially the relationships that they have with their grandchildren.	A. Look at the roles of many older people within their families (i.e., parent, grandparent, great-grandparent, provider, counselor, caregiver, companion, mediator, mentor). Ask the children to share with the class fun experiences that they have had with older family members. B. Discuss how older members of the family help to provide family history and background. READ AND DISCUSS. When I Was Young In The Mountains (1982) by Cynthia Rylant. C. Have the children talk about how they will be as an older family member, and draw a picture of this person. D. Have the children refer back to the Family Trees that they did under objective 1.1.H.

HEALTH AND AGING

GRADE LEVEL: PRESCHOOL - 3

CONCEPT IV: OLD AND YOUNG CAN ENJOY EACH OTHER AND LEARN FROM EACH OTHER.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE	CONTENT	TEACHING-LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
4.1 Is able to describe how doing things with an older person "intergenerating" can be fun and interesting.	Older people and younger people have much to learn and share with each other. Older and younger people can do much to assist each other in living life to the fullest and best. Older people and younger people seem to have a natural tendency for getting along together.	A. Have the children discuss a "fun" thing that they have done with an older person in their family. B. Ask the children to discuss a "fun" thing that they have done with an older person not in their family. C. Ask the children to name something that they would like to do with an older person. D. READ AND DISCUSS: I Dance In My Red Pajamas (1982) by Edith Hurd. This book illustrates the fun time that a granddaughter and her grandparents have when she goes to visit them. She ends up dancing in her red pajamas with them in the evening. Or, READ AND DISCUSS: Crack-of-Dawn Walkers (1984) by Amy Hest that discusses a granddaughters every-other-Sunday walks with her grandfather and how special this time is to both of them. The "crack-of-dawn" walkers leave their two very different sized footprints in the snow for everyone to see.
4.2 Realizes that there are many programs today that focus on bringing younger and older people together--for the benefit of both.	Intergenerational programs have been slow to catch on in many parts of this country, and the children may not be aware of them. Efforts to bring old and young together are important and will help us to understand each other better and love each other more.	A. Talk to the children about some of the intergenerational programs that the schools and communities are doing. B. Show intergenerational pictures from the book: Growing Together: An Intergenerational Sourcebook (1986) by the American Association for Retired Persons.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE	CONTENT	TEACHING-LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
43 Is able to describe how older and younger people can be helpful to each other.	The relationship between older people and children is a reciprocal one. Each has something to offer to the other than can make their relationships were special and rewarding. The love between older and younger people can be lasting and strong.	A. READ AND DISCUSS: Good As New (1982) by Barbara Douglass. In this story the grandfather repairs a prized possession of his young grandson so that it is again "good as new." Illustrates an older person doing something very helpful for a younger person. B. Ask the children to relate something special that an older person has done for him/her. C. READ AND DISCUSS: Now One Foot, Now The Other (1980) by Tomie De Paola. In this book a young boys helps the grandfather that he loves very much learn to speak and walk again after the grandfather suffers a stroke. Much the same way that the grandfather had helped him learn to speak and walk years ago. This book speaks well to childr helping older people, and also shows the reciprocal nature of the relationship. D. Ask the children to relate something that they have done for an olde person or something that they would like to do. E. READ AND DISCUSS: I Know A Lady (1984) by Charlotte Zolotow. This elderly lady is the type of person who always makes people feel special, and the type of person that will always be remembered and loved. The woman is active and multidimensional. A good book to show positive relationships between young and old. F. Have the children draw a picture of themself doing something with an older person--a picture of older and younger together. G. Talk about how older and younger people can advocate for each other Examples of this are younger people joining groups such as the Gray Panthers and older people serving on School Boards and working with such groups as Foster Grandparents.

HEALTH AND AGING

GRADE LEVEL: PRESCHOOL - 3

CONCEPT V: PEOPLE NEED TO PLAN FOR BECOMING OLDER

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE	CONTENT	TEACHING-LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
5.1 Realizes that one needs to plan for life's events.	Planning and anticipatory guidance is important throughout life. It helps us to not only see where we have been but where we are going. Planning helps people to make well thought out decisions about their lives.	A. Go back over with the children how they earlier discussed activities that they could plan to do throughout life. B. Discuss with the children how they are planning for things even now (i.e., saving for a special toy, planning with their parents for a special vacation, planning on how to get all their school work done). C. READ AND DISCUSS: My Grandpa Retired Today (1982) by Elaine Knox-Wagner. Discuss with the children about how planning for the time when they retire is very important, and how they should start planning very early.
5.2 Realizes that planning can begin at a very early age.	Planning for old age can begin very early in life and help to shape our life activities. Most Americans will spend a large part of their lives as older people, and it is good to plan and be prepared for those years.	A. Discuss with the children about how thinking about what they want to do when they are older such as work, leisure and family activities can help them to lead more successful lives as senior citizens. B. Discuss with the children how they might plan to become "Great Older People." Have them talk about the older person they want to be and how they plan to get that way. Offer anticipatory guidance and support their endeavors.

HEALTH AND AGING

GRADE LEVEL: PRESCHOOL - 3

CONCEPT VI: PEOPLE HAVE MUCH CONTROL OVER THE OLDER PERSON THEY WILL BECOME

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE	CONTENT	TEACHING-LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
6.1 Realizes that he/she is very much in control of what their later years will become.	Although there are some of physiological aspects of aging over which the person has little control, there are many aspects of aging over which the person has much control. These aspects are largely in the psychosocial area of aging. They are heavily influenced about our attitudes toward aging and by our previous life activites.	A. Talk to the children about how they are free to make many decisions about what they will be like in later life (i.e., career, hobbies, friends, family). Discuss with them the fact that they are largely "in control" and "free to be me." B. Discuss with the children that they play a major part in the decision making in their lives.
6.2 Is able to see that people age individually--that all older people are not alike.	Aging is a highly individual process that is largely based on what the person was like as a younger person. We do not change drastically as we age. A happy younger person has a good chance of being a happy older person.	A. Discuss with the children about how their perceptions of older people can affect the older people that they become (i.e., if they think old age is great it is likely to be great, if they think it is crummy it is likely to be crummy--self fulfilling prophecy). B. Talk to the children about the fact that what they do as younger people will have a great affect on what they do as older people.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE	CONTENT	TEACHING-LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
6.3 Will recognize that he/she has the potential to be a great older person.	Everyone has the potential to be a great older person. Aging is, in a large part, what we make of it. If we want to be a great older person there is a good chance that we will be. Since most of us will be old for a large part of our lives we should try to live and enjoy old age to the fullest. Along the way we should try to facilitate the lives of already old people so that they can be great older people to.	A. The child will talk about themself as being able to be a great older person. B. Review with the children the concepts that have been gone over in their Health and Aging Unit. C. Ask the children for words to describe what they will be like as a great older person. Write down the words and discuss them with the children. D. Tell the children that you have great expectations for them as they become older people. E. Compile a "Me As A Great Older Person" scrapbook for each of the children's assignments during this Unit.